

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph at page 14, line 26 through page 15, line 20 with the following amended paragraph.

--FIG. 4 schematically illustrates power-generating operation of the first stacked photovoltaic element of the present invention. An electrical defect in the first photovoltaic element acts as a short-circuit to current passage. When the electrical defect 402 in the first photovoltaic element 305 is close to the electrical defect 403 in the second photovoltaic element 302, no deterioration of the photovoltaic element characteristics is caused by these defects, because the transparent electrode 306 is removed by the shunt passivation treatment carried out after the stacked photovoltaic element is assembled. When these defects are apart from each other at a distance, on the other hand, the characteristics may be deteriorated, because of insufficient shunt passivation treatment. Although the first photovoltaic element 305 is provided with the first zinc oxide layer 304 of lower resistivity on the substrate side surface, [[it]] the layer is sufficiently thin enough to limit and causes spread of short-circuit current in the lateral spreading of short-circuit currents direction to only a limited extent. Therefore, it little deteriorates the characteristics causes only minor deterioration of the photovoltaic element characteristics.--